

## Department of State

## § 34.16

(2) STATE's proposed offset schedule.

(b) The request must be signed by the employee and should identify and explain with reasonable specificity and brevity the facts, evidence and witnesses which the employee believes support his or her position. If the employee objects to the percentage of disposable pay to be deducted from each check, the request should state the objection and the reasons for it.

(c) The employee must also specify whether an oral or paper hearing is requested. If an oral hearing is desired, the request should explain why the matter cannot be resolved by review of the documentary evidence alone.

(d) If the employee files a request for an outside hearing later than the required 30 calendar days as described in paragraph (a) of this section, STATE may accept the request if the employee can show that the delay was because of circumstances beyond his or her control or because of failure to receive notice of the filing deadline (unless the employee has actual notice of the filing deadline).

(e) An employee waives the right to an outside hearing and will have his or her pay offset if the employee fails to file a petition for a hearing as prescribed in paragraph (a) of this section.

### § 34.15 Outside hearings.

(a) If an employee timely files a request for an outside hearing under § 34.13(g)(2), pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 5514(a)(2), STATE shall select the time, date, and location of the hearing.

(b) Outside hearings shall be conducted by a hearing official not under the supervision or control of STATE.

(c) *Procedure.* (1) After the employee requests a hearing, the hearing official shall notify the employee of the form of the hearing to be provided. If the hearing will be oral, notice shall set forth the date, time and location of the hearing. If the hearing will be paper, the employee shall be notified that he or she should submit arguments in writing to the hearing official by a specified date after which the record shall be closed. This date shall give the employee reasonable time to submit documentation.

(2) *Oral hearing.* An employee who requests an oral hearing shall be pro-

vided an oral hearing if the hearing official determines that the matter cannot be resolved by review of documentary evidence alone (e.g., when an issue of credibility or veracity is involved). The hearing is not an adversarial adjudication, and need not take the form of an evidentiary hearing.

(3) *Paper hearing.* If the hearing official determines that an oral hearing is not necessary, he or she will make a decision based upon a review of the available written record.

(4) *Record.* The hearing official must maintain a summary record of any hearing provided by this subpart. Witnesses who provide testimony will do so under oath or affirmation.

(5) *Content of decision.* The written decision shall include:

(i) A statement of the facts presented to support the origin, nature, and amount of the debt;

(ii) The hearing official's findings, analysis, and conclusions; and

(iii) The terms of any repayment schedules, or the date salary offset will commence, if applicable.

(6) *Failure to appear.* In the absence of good cause shown (e.g., excused illness), an employee who fails to appear at a hearing shall be deemed, for the purpose of this subpart, to admit the existence and amount of the debt as described in the notice of intent. The hearing official shall schedule a new hearing date upon the request of the creditor agency representative when good cause is shown.

(d) A hearing official's decision is considered to be an official certification regarding the existence and amount of the debt for purposes of executing salary offset under 5 U.S.C. 5514 only. It does not supersede the finding by STATE that a debt is owed and does not affect the Government's ability to recoup the indebtedness through alternative collection methods under § 34.10.

### § 34.16 Procedures for salary offset.

Unless otherwise provided by statute or contract, the following procedures apply to salary offset:

(a) *Method.* Salary offset will be made by deduction at one or more officially established pay intervals from the current pay account of the employee without his or her consent.